

We need to rebuild and restore public trust in Congress and its Members. And there can be no better way to begin this process than by giving up lobbyist-provided meals, tickets, vacations, food baskets, and golf outings that have come to symbolize what's wrong with Washington and the way it operates. These gifts should be flat out eliminated. Every Member of Congress earns a generous salary. It's more than enough to live on and serve the interests of the people who are paying it—the taxpayers.

So, Mr. Speaker, I urge my colleagues to join me in taking the pledge to do away with gifts from lobbyists. Support the gift ban and get back to work for the people who sent us here.

GREAT PLAINS AND PANHANDLE HEALTH SERVICES

HON. LARRY COMBEST

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 1995

Mr. COMBEST. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to recognize the dedicated professionals in the home health care industry. Across the Nation, one of the great concerns is the fear of not being able to receive high-quality yet affordable health care. In the search for one of the most effective ways to provide this, one need not look to the future, but rather to our history and to the oldest tradition of health service delivery—Home Health Care. This time-honored tradition of allowing the elderly, disabled, and ill to remain in the comfort of their own homes and receive the medical assistance they need has proven to be one of the most cost-effective and beneficial prescriptions a doctor can dispense.

Allowing a patient to stay in their own familiar surroundings allows them to retain their dignity and sense of independence, while still receiving quality medical services. It also allows them to be surrounded by loved ones and family which helps to maintain the ever important family union which can play such a key role in helping to recover from an illness.

In the United States today, home health care is regaining the popularity which it once had. As the desire for this important care increases, home care agencies across the country have met the challenge and now offer a full range of valuable services from skilled nursing and social services to physical, occupational and speech therapies. Nationwide there are over 17,500 agencies which help provide home care and this proven alternative to lengthy hospital stays now accounts for an estimated \$27 billion of the resources spent on health care, as they provide services to over 7 million Americans.

This growing segment of our health care industry deserves to be recognized for its continuing effort to provide affordable and quality care to those in need. We, in Congress and throughout America, can lead the effort to recognize home care agencies and the valuable and cost-effective health care resources which they provide. I call on all Americans to support these valuable agencies and providers who work to enhance the lives of those ill and disabled who are in need of home care assistance. In so doing, I salute all who provide home health care.

RETIREMENT OF BERNICE COLEMAN-LEWIS

HON. EDOLPHUS TOWNS

OF NEW YORK

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 1995

Mr. TOWNS. Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to acknowledge the retirement of Mrs. Bernice Coleman-Lewis from the U.S. Customs Service. Bernice worked for the Customs Service for 25 years. She rose through the ranks from the position of clerk typist to ultimately become a customs liquidating officer at John F. Kennedy International Airport.

During her tenure with Customs, Bernice was instrumental in helping to ensure that the National Treasury Employee Union [NTEU] became the union for Customs employees. She also became the executive vice president of the NTEU. Bernice was also a member of the Quality Circle in Customs. Always mindful of giving back to the community, Bernice participated in the Customs mentor program for inner city youth, and served 2 years as vice president of the Sentinel Society, Inc., a minority Government employee organization.

Mrs. Lewis has also been active in community organizations, including the 835 Ocean Avenue Tenants Association. She served as the secretary of St. Catherine Chapter 758, for the order of the Eastern Star, and she became a member of Bridge Street A.M.E. Church of Brooklyn in 1994.

Now that she has retired, Bernice is attending State University of New York [SUNY], in Old Westbury, and was accepted into the education program. Mrs. Coleman-Lewis aspires to teach in the Amityville school system on the elementary level.

Bernice is a proud parent of four children, two girls, April and Raisa, and two sons, Ajene and Malik. She is also the long time companion of Nathaniel Lewis. It is my distinct pleasure and honor to introduce Mrs. Bernice Coleman-Lewis to my House colleagues.

LEGISLATION WHICH IS GOOD FOR THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT AND THE CITY OF CORPUS CHRISTI, TX

HON. SOLOMON P. ORTIZ

OF TEXAS

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Thursday, November 9, 1995

Mr. ORTIZ. Mr. Speaker, I introduce today a bill to create a win-win situation for the Federal Government and the city of Corpus Christi, TX.

Mr. Speaker, the 104th Congress has made much of reducing the size of Government, saving taxpayer dollars and moving the decision of Government back to States. The administration's reinventing government proposals accomplish the same goals. As a part of the latter, the Vice President has directed the Bureau of Reclamation to initiate a program of title transfer of water supply projects to move ownership of these projects from the Federal Government to the States or local entities.

I introduce this legislation today on behalf of the State of Texas, to create a process so the State or our public agencies may purchase and accept title to the Bureau of Reclamation

projects in the State. This bill has the full support of the Texas State legislature, which recently passed a resolution, signed by the Governor, accepting the responsibility for this process of title transfer.

Most importantly, Mr. Speaker, I introduce this legislation at the request of the city of Corpus Christi. The city supports title transfer and wants local responsibility for the Nueces River project, locally known as the Choke Canyon project.

In 1976, the city of Corpus Christi and the Nueces River Authority contracted with the Bureau of Reclamation for the construction of the Choke Canyon Reservoir-Nueces River project—on the Frio River near Three Rivers, TX. The primary purpose of the project was to provide an additional water supply for the city of Corpus Christi through the year 2040. Since the project was completed in 1982, however, studies have determined that the current supply to the city from the project is less than was promised, and additional water supplies will be required by the year 2003. The local sponsors are proposing that the repayment agreements be recalculated to reflect the diminished water supply from the project, as well as the expenses to the local sponsors in acquiring additional water supplies to compensate for the projected shortfall in the Choke Canyon/Lake Corpus Christi system. After reallocating project costs and/or negotiating a fair settlement of project repayment obligations, the local sponsors are prepared to initiate a project buy-out and transfer of title utilizing a discounted prepayment of their fair share of project costs.

Mr. Speaker, our local citizens are taking a very responsible approach to this situation. They are offering the Federal Government a substantial cash payment up front, they are offering to purchase and protect thousands of acres of sensitive land as mitigation for the original project and they are accepting the responsibility for the future operations and maintenance of the project. As the Corpus Christi Water Engineer James Dobson pointed out in recent Congressional hearings, there are significant benefits to the legislation I offer today:

For the Federal Government, these include: Immediate access to large amounts of capital from early payoffs; avoidance of long term liabilities for Federal share of project O&M costs; avoidance of other future liabilities; continued compliance with Federal project objectives; and reduced federal administrative expenses.

For the local sponsors the benefits include: Long range economic savings by prepayment of debt; freedom from expenses caused by excessive Federal involvement in the project management; and local decision making on resources used locally.

Mr. Speaker, I want to point out to my colleagues, I introduce this legislation on behalf of a very responsible community in terms of its approach to water resources. As Mayor Mary Rhodes recently pointed out:

I want to emphasize that we are not talking about an area that places disproportional demands on its water resources. Texas Water Development Board studies show that Corpus Christi's per capita water use is one of the lowest in the state for a major city—only 155 gallons per capita per day. Our industries are very water efficient—in the petroleum refining and petrochemical sectors, facilities in the Corpus Christi area use only 40 to 60 percent as much water per barrel of product as similar facilities in other parts of Texas.